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SUBJECT: OSCE WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS: OCTOBER 13 - 16, 2009

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Carol Fuller for Reasons 1.4(B)&(D)

Parliamentary Assembly Examines Energy Security and
Environmental Challenges...

¶1. (SBU) During the October 9-12, 2009, Fall Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA), more than 200 parliamentarians from the OSCE participating States (pS) met in Athens to examine challenges to achieving energy security in the region. The United States was represented by Helsinki Commission (HC) Chairman Benjamin Cardin, Co-Chairman Alcee Hastings, HC Commissioner Michael McIntyre, and Senator George Voinovich, a staunch supporter of the Commission. Parliamentarians discussed energy and environmental challenges in the OSCE region, including the impact of climate change and energy insecurity. Representatives from several pS stressed the utility of adopting regional approaches to addressing energy security and environmental concerns. In this regard, the Greek delegation highlighted the proposal put forward by the Hellenic Parliament for establishing a regional European-Mediterranean Energy Cooperation group. Other parliamentarians underlined the importance of strengthening good governance and investing in infrastructure in efforts to address energy security and environmental challenges in the region.

...and Engages in Spirited Discussion of Arab-Israeli Conflict

¶2. (SBU) At the Parliamentary Assembly's Mediterranean Forum on October 11, Helsinki Commission Co-Chairman Hastings urged improved coordination and focus on core values among the numerous organizations that seek to address issues of concern in the Mediterranean area, to address problems of overlap and institutional fatigue. During the discussion, parliamentarians from France, Egypt, and Jordan engaged the Israeli ambassador to Greece in a heated exchange over well-known differences on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Several

speakers, including the personal representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office on the Mediterranean, stressed the need for the OSCE to play a role in resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict; to this end, they suggested that the Palestinian Authority, as well as possibly Libya and Syria, be granted OSCE Partner status. Other recommendations included strengthening cooperation on migration, rule of law, and economic and trade matters to address social and economic inequality. On the margins of the Forum, Secretariat officials informed Poloff that the Kazakh chair of the Mediterranean Partners group had selected three priority activities for the coming year: border management including migration; desertification and water management; and a young diplomats exchange program.

Kazakhstan Hosts First Official OSCE Event As Incoming CiO

13. (SBU) On October 12-13, Astana hosted the first preparatory conference for the 18th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) on transportation and border crossings, a theme chosen by Kazakhstan as the incoming Chairman-in-Office. The conference, generally viewed as a kind of debut event for the incoming CiO, was well organized and drew an estimated 170 participants. From the Central Asian states, Turkmenistan was notably absent, despite Kazakh efforts to get them to at least send someone from their embassy. A number of EU states noted privately that given the large amount of overlap with EC responsibilities, prior treatment of this theme in 2006 under the Belgian OSCE

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Chairmanship, and potential for a too-narrow focus on technical and transportation issues, there was limited enthusiasm for the theme in capitals. However, most agreed that if it fostered cooperation among the Central Asian states, it would be worthwhile. OSCE Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities Svilanovic told Poloff he was concerned it would be difficult to keep the remainder of the forum process linked closely enough to security issues to make it relevant in the OSCE context and said he would make recommendations to address this. He also said he would encourage inclusion of a session on Afghanistan in the next event. The next part of the EEF, Forum Segment I, will be held in Vienna on February 1-2.

ISAF LTG Dutton Reports to Joint FSC/PC

14. (SBU) At an October 14 Joint FSC/PC, Deputy Commander of ISAF, LTG JB Dutton (UK) delivered a detailed presentation on the progress and challenges facing the 42-member coalition in Afghanistan. LTG Dutton offered an explanation for the poor state of the Afghan National Police, particularly in comparison to the better trained and organized Afghan National Army. "Many police officers are corrupt, illiterate, or drug addicted," he said. In the follow-on question and answer period, several OSCE participating States picked up on Dutton's references to work on borders as an area in which the OSCE can contribute toward strengthening Afghan security. The EU said it was looking for ways to improve engagement with Afghanistan, especially with respect to border security and fighting drugs. Canada said OSCE projects "must span both sides of the borders that Afghanistan shares with pS." Russia said it had long suggested that Russia be more involved in discussions with coalition member states on Afghan issues and urged greater NATO and CSTO cooperation. Kazakhstan said there was an opportunity for the OSCE to be more actively engaged in Afghanistan - not excluded. The Afghan ambassador cited numerous statistics lending support to claims of progress in Afghanistan. He said the role of the military in providing security must be complemented by civilian efforts and said now was the time for possible expansion of cooperation between Afghanistan and the OSCE. In his concluding remarks, LTG Dutton raised the possibility that the OSCE might be well positioned to help Afghanistan create an "expeditionary police force."

CPC Says "Support Team" for South Ossetia Under Discussion

15. (SBU) Conflict Prevention Center (CPC) staff told Poloff October 15 that the Greek Chairmanship was trying to move ahead with the "support team" proposed by Special Representative Christopoulos as an alternative to the three-person roving presence, which he abandoned after his disastrous September 30-October 2 trip to Tbilisi and Tskhinvali. Three key issues have emerged: whether the team will be allowed to support Christopoulos, participation in the Geneva discussions, in addition to the IPRM meetings; whether Christopoulos will be allowed to appoint substitutes for IPRM meetings; and whether OSCE vehicles can be used to transport Christopoulos and his team across the administrative boundary line and within the South Ossetia region. Christopoulos reportedly spoke to Russian DFM Karasin in Moscow October 13 and received tacit support for the team, s link to Geneva and the appointment of substitutes, but was unable to draw Karasin into a discussion of transportation. The vehicles reportedly are an issue of

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concern for Georgia as well, as Georgian officials fear that basing vehicles more or less permanently in Tskhinvali could imply equal status for the region. The composition of the proposed team also remains unclear, and is likely to be a sticking point. Christopoulos intended to raise the idea with Georgian authorities and South Ossetian representatives during the Geneva Co-Chairs, visit to the region the week of October 19.

Russia Says OSCE Mission to Moldova Oversteps Mandate

16. (SBU) Responding to Head of Mission Remler, s report to the Permanent Council on October 15, Russian PermRep Azimov criticized the OSCE Mission to Moldova for overstepping its 1993 mandate, which explicitly tasks the Mission to facilitate a lasting settlement of the Transnistria conflict. Azimov argued that the Mission, s democratization, human rights, and other activities fall outside the scope of its mandate and divert resources away from conflict resolution efforts. Others (the United States, the EU, Ukraine, and Moldova) took the opposite approach, and commended the Mission for its efforts to encourage Moldovan authorities to respect the rule of law and uphold Moldova, s OSCE and international commitments. Remler largely refrained from comment, stating merely that conflict resolution and other activities are inter-related. On the Transnistria issue itself, delegations reiterated their support for a political settlement and called for the resumption of formal negotiations in the 5 2 format. Azimov limited his comments to an expression of support for "practical" confidence-building measures, while declaring that all parties to the 5 2 should have equal rights.

Economic Coordinator Highlights Growing Interest in Second Dimension

17. (U) Coordinator for Economic and Environmental Activities Svilanovic gave his annual report to the Permanent Council on October 15. He noted "growing interest in the OSCE, s second dimension," pointing to a recent working group report on the future of the second dimension, and highlighted the OSCE, s involvement in the regional ENVSEC initiative, particularly its work in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Svilanovic also noted growing interest among pS in OSCE involvement in assessing and mitigating the security implications of climate change and promised a proposal for further steps. In addition, he highlighted close cooperation with the Parliamentary Assembly and said that at the recent PA meeting in Athens, multiple delegations had said the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative might be worthy of OSCE support. The EU called the second dimension an integral part of comprehensive security that should be included in discussions of Europe's security architecture, and called on

the OSCE to develop more early warning and confidence-building measures in this dimension. Russia said discussions about the future of the second dimension provided an opportunity to correct the "historic imbalance" in the OSCE. Russia gave cautious approval to OSCE involvement in energy security, but said OSCE involvement in climate change issues would only direct attention away from more urgent processes elsewhere. Kazakhstan said OSCE field activities should be driven by the needs of host countries; that with climate change expected to be a threat multiplier, there should be discussion of the issue in the OSCE; and that water issues should be a priority for OSCE engagement.

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Azerbaijan Insists on Links Between Turkey-Armenia Rapprochement, Nagorno-Karabakh settlement

¶8. (C) Azerbaijan heavily criticized the October 10 signing of the protocols between Turkey and Armenia at the October 15 Permanent Council meeting. In direct contradiction to laudatory statements made by the United States, the EU, Canada, and Switzerland, Azerbaijan insisted that the normalization process, if undertaken separately from a Nagorno-Karabakh settlement, will have a negative effect on peace and security in the region. Azerbaijan argued that normalization will embolden Armenia to continue its "unconstructive stance" in Minsk Group negotiations; to avoid such negative consequences, the two processes should be inextricably linked as part of a package settlement on Nagorno-Karabakh. Statements made by Turkey and Armenia were pragmatic and constructive, focusing on the benefits to be achieved through the normalization process, both for the parties involved and for regional security. Turkey noted the "correlation" between the normalization process and the Minsk Group efforts, and stated its belief that this correlation has led to increased momentum in both areas. Nevertheless, Turkey said it was interested in seeing concrete steps taken in the near future towards resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In its response, Armenia rejected the links made to the Minsk Group process and characterized the protocols as an essential tool to overcome the impediments in relations between Turkey and Armenia, the ultimate goal of which is to increase regional security and stability.

Ukraine Confirms Candidacy for 2013 OSCE Chairmanship

¶9. (SBU) At the Permanent Council meeting on October 15, Ukraine confirmed its interest and willingness to take over the OSCE Chairmanship in 2013.

CDA Speaks with Turkmen Ambassador About HDIM Attendance

¶10. (SBU) In an October 15 meeting with CDA Fuller, Turkmen Ambassador Aydogdyev said his country will never participate in the HDIM in Warsaw as long as "terrorists" were registered as participants, referring to several exiled Turkmen NGO leaders. In reply to the CDA's observation that no Turkmen NGOs attended last year's HDIM and neither did the GoTX, Aydogdyev replied that the NGOs' registration was sufficient reason not to attend. Aydogdyev said Turkmenistan would be "delighted" to participate in the HDIM, but for the NGO participation. He added, however, that Turkmenistan was not missing much by not going to the HDIM - the government meets with civil society in Turkmenistan. He added that he regularly meets with Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and others in Geneva and he is intimately aware of their claims. Aydogdyev said Turkmenistan wants a clear mechanism by which certain groups can be excluded from the HDIM, such as the presence of names on an Interpol list) or "some other list."

High Level Planning Group Trying to Live Up to Name

¶11. (C) Poloffs met October 15 with Greek Brigadier General Georgios Chatzikonstantinou, Commander of the High Level

Planning Group (HLPG), the body charged with planning an eventual OSCE peacekeeping mission in Nagorno-Karabakh. Chatzikonstantinou shared some impressions of his recent visit to the region, while carefully excising details of the recent Minsk Group meetings, which he is not authorized to

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divulge. He expressed support for a JCS proposal to work with the Marshall Center on further development of the peacekeeping plans, but stressed the need to include the Conflict Prevention Center (CPC) in any such event, given that the CPC likely would be in charge of coordinating the non-military aspects of such a mission. Chatzikonstantinou highlighted the importance of preparatory operational planning within the OSCE, but noted that the CPC does not seem to appreciate the necessity of this initial conceptual work, which ideally would be completed prior to an agreement on the Basic Principles. Based on this feedback, Poloffs will be sounding out the CPC in the coming week to gauge their interest in working together with the HLPG and the Marshall Center on this topic.

Secretariat Urges U.S. and Like-Minded States to Stand Firm on OMIK Budget

¶12. (C) In an October 8 meeting with Niamh Walsh, the Secretariat desk officer who covers the OSCE Mission in Kosovo (OMIK), Walsh said it took "bloodletting" within the mission for it to arrive at its proposed 2010 budget of EUR 22.75 million (a 15 percent reduction from the 2009 budget of EUR 26.91 million). She expressed trepidation that if the Quintet and other like-minded states do not now show coordinated and firm support for reductions during upcoming budget negotiations, Serbia and Russia will dominate the discussion and walk the reductions back, particularly in the Human Rights and Communities unit (formerly monitoring). Without the proposed cuts, Walsh said OMIK would be unlikely to come forward with comparable reductions in coming years, given the internal turmoil it generates. She noted that during a September trip of OSCE delegations, Advisory Committee on Management and Finance representatives to Pristina, Quintet states had largely remained silent, while Serbia and Russia had aggressively drilled the mission with questions about its activities and status neutrality. (USOSCE Poloff meetings with Quintet delegations in Vienna suggest that so far the UK is the only member other than the United States committed to pressing hard for these reductions.) However, Walsh said that while Serbia and Russia were watching the mission closely to limit its activities to those areas they consider status-neutral, there was no indication that Serbia, Russia, or other non-recognizing states intended to pull the rug out from under OMIK's election-related activities in advance of the November elections.

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